

REPUBLICANS' VICTORY MESSAGE STILL RINGS LOUD AND CLEAR

(Mr. SMITH of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, a lot has changed in Washington over the past 9 months, and the message that sent Republicans to victory last November is still ringing loud and clear.

Americans are not talking about how we balance the budget, but whether or not we will do so. People are also talking about how we save Medicare, not whether or not we will do so.

Our mission this fall is clear. We will pass a budget that brings us into balance by 2002. We will enact meaningful welfare reform that emphasizes work, families, and hope for the future. We will save Medicare from bankruptcy. We will reduce the size of this overbloated government that is taking away our freedoms.

Government has grown quite large. After World War II, we spent 12 percent of our GDP, our gross domestic product, for government spending. Now, we spend almost 22 percent of GDP. We have done this not by taxes, but by borrowing. We must balance the budget if we care about our kids and our grandkids having a good future.

TO PRESIDENT CHIRAC: STOP THE TESTING NOW

(Mr. UNDERWOOD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday at 12:30 p.m. local time in Mururoa, the French Government exploded an underground nuclear weapon in the first of eight proposed tests that President Chirac contends are in France's vital national interests. It was also the 205th nuclear blast that France exploded, but yet they claim they still need more computer data.

Tuesday's explosion was detected by seismic monitoring stations as far as away as Australia, but France has yet to get the message. Testing half a world away from home displays an arrogance that is unbecoming of a civilized nation.

President Chirac has hinted that France may cut the testing program short. The gentleman from American Samoa [Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA], our distinguished colleague, made his contribution by being detained by French test authorities last week.

President Chirac, listen to the gentleman from American Samoa [Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA] and all peoples of the Pacific. Stop the testing now.

KEEP GOING

(Mrs. SEASTRAND asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. SEASTRAND. Mr. Speaker, most of the Members of this House have spent the last few weeks traveling our districts and meeting with our constituents. In my town meetings, and in a very successful Medicare conference, my central coast California constituents seemed to be worried that this Congress will be bogged down and not complete the change we started the first 100 days.

They want Medicare to be safe for future generations. They know we must end failed spending policies. They know that we can and must balance the budget and give our children a future free of debt and full of opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, the American people are on to something and my constituents understand that after 40 years of liberals defending the status quo, that the new majority of this Congress is changing the system that created the debt and rewarded inefficiency. They want solutions. They want action and they want it now.

CONGRATULATIONS TO CAL RIPKEN ON HIS 2,131ST CONSECUTIVE GAME

(Mr. CARDIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of all the Members of this House, and all baseball fans around the Nation, let me offer our collective congratulations to Cal Ripken, Jr., of the Baltimore Orioles. Last night at Camden Yards in the Third Congressional District of Maryland, Cal played his 2,131st consecutive game, one more than the immortal Lou Gehrig, and did it with the same grace and dignity that has marked his remarkable career.

Mr. Speaker, there was not a dry eye in Camden Yards when Cal Ripken spoke after the game and gave credit to his family and the baseball fans for this remarkable accomplishment.

Thank you, Cal, for being such a great role model for young and old alike.

MEMBERS MUST FULFILL THEIR DUTIES

(Mr. BALLENGER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, as I spent August back home with family and neighbors, I had time to reflect upon why I am here. It's easy to get caught up in inside-the-beltway activities and small battles and forget why our constituents sent us here.

I will tell Members why my constituents sent me here. They sent me here to balance the budget and scale back big Government. They sent me here to save and strengthen Medicare. They sent me here to change the destructive welfare system. And they sent me here

to relieve them of their overly heavy tax burden.

These are simple things. We can do this, and we should do this now. This was in our job description when we were sent here, and if we don't fulfill those duties, our employers will find someone who will.

MEDICARE'S PROBLEMS SHOULD BE SOLVED INDEPENDENT OF TAX CUTS

(Mr. MILLER of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, it is quite telling on how excited my Republican colleagues get when democrats tell the truth about their plan to cut Medicare by \$270 billion. I am sure in their districts they got the same reaction that I got in mine when people learned that those cuts in Medicare were not going to be recycled to improve or extend the longevity of the Medicare Program, but rather much of that money was going to be taken away for the first time in history from the Medicare Program to pay for tax cuts for some of the wealthiest people in this country.

My constituents understood the need to make adjustments in Medicare. What they could not understand was a plan to raid that system, to make the problems worse, and for the first time in history take money away from Medicare for other purposes in terms of the budget.

Medicare ought to be solved within the Medicare system, independent of the drive to pay for tax cuts for the wealthy, to pay for tax cuts for the richest families in this country, while stealing the money from the elderly who need health care that they can afford.

MEDICARE

(Mr. BONO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BONO. Mr. Speaker, when I was home in my district last week, I met with constituents to get their input on Medicare. The most consistent question they had was, "Didn't Congress know about the Medicare problem last year or 2 years ago?" I said yes. But, they refused to confront it.

I urge my colleagues to listen to their constituents and listen to the professionals—the doctors, nurses, hospital administrators, and, of course, our seniors. We cannot propose a solution without their recommendations.

In my district, I have set up a task force to come up with some answers and help find the right solution. Let us not be so arrogant that we think we alone can solve this problem without seeking the advice of the people we represent.

My constituents realize that a 30-year-old Government program needs to